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ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS:

District Medical Officer of Health (and Divisional Medical Officer for North Herts. Area):

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Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor.

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JOHN SPENCER, D.P.A., A.C.C.S., Clerk of the Council.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Royston Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with Ministry of Health Circular 112/50 I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1950.

Compared with the previous year the local birth rate (15.6) and death rate (11.2) are both more favourable. Though the comparability factor of 0.87 supplied by the Registrar General shows the age composition of local population to be well above the national mean, the local death rate for 1950 is below that for England and Wales (11.6) and the local birth rate (15.6) is close to the national figure (15.8).

I would acknowledge the assistance in the preparation of this report from Mr. S.M.Jackson, your Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector, who is responsible for the sections on sanitary matters.

Also I would thank your Council and its chief officers for every consideration and help during the year.

I am, gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

July, 1951. VICTOR R. WALKER.

SECTION A.

LOCAL STATISTICS.

Area (in acres)	1626.
Civilian Population - Registrar General's Estimate for mid-1950	4,808.
Number of inhabited houses at 1st.April, 1950 ... ... (estimated)	1,330.
Rateable Value (1st. April, 1950)	£28,541.
Sum represented by Penny Rate	£114.14.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the year 1950.

		Totals.	M.	F.	Royston U.D. Local Rates.	Comparable rates for England & Wales.
LIVE BIRTHS.	Legitimate	67	35	32		
	Illegitimate	8	6	2		
	All	75	41	34		
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population					15.6	15.8

		Totals.	M.	F.
STILLBIRTHS.	Legitimate	7	6	1
	Illegitimate	-	-	-
		7	6	1

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	85	23

	Totals.	M.	F.
DEATHS.	54	28	26

Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	11.2	11.6

DEATHRATES OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

All infants per 1,000 live births	53	30

Actual number of deaths (a) under 4 weeks and (b) totals under 1 year

	4 weeks	1 year
Legitimate	4	4
Illegitimate	-	-
All	4	4

Deaths from Puerperal Causes	1
Deaths from Cancer (all sites)	14
Deaths from Measles	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough	-
Deaths from other infective and and parasitic diseases	-

Comment on Vital Statistics.

The estimated "Home" Population for the mid. year exceeds the estimated "Civilian" Population for the previous year by 368, and the figure of live births (75) shows a rise of 11 on 1949.

For this particular year, the losses from stillbirths and from infant deaths under 4 weeks compare unfavourably with the rates for the country as a whole. However, these local numbers, being small, are more liable to marked variation from year to year.

SECTION B. Provision of Health Services for the Area.

No important change took place during the year.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water Supply.

The whole of the district, with the exception of 7 houses at Eagle Tavern, is supplied with water from the chalk by the Royston Water Company, by a piped supply of excellent quality.

A sample of water from the well serving the houses at Eagle Tavern showed the water to be satisfactory for drinking purposes.

There are 5 houses at The Green which are supplied by means of a standpipe. All the other houses in the district are supplied from the water mains direct to the houses.

Bacteriological and chemical examinations were made during the year and analysis shows the water to be in a satisfactory chemical and bacteriological condition and suitable for drinking.

No shortage was experienced during the year.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Eight new houses built by private enterprise, and 25 new houses built by the Council were connected to the sewerage system during the year.

During the year the Ministry of Health sanctioned the scheme for the improvements at the Sewage Form and the Consulting Engineers proceeded with the preparation of the Drawings and Contract Documents, and it was anticipated that tenders for the work would be invited early in 1951.

Refuse Removal and Disposal.

The motor refuse vehicle continued to give good service and no serious mechanical trouble was met with during the year.

The cost of refuse removal for the year amounted to £713.10.3.

The tip at Coombes Hole was maintenied as well as available labour allowed. The work necessary to bring the tip into a satisfactory condition has yet to be carried out.

Rat infestation on the tip and on the Sewage Farm was kept within reason by regular baiting and poisoning carried out by the Rodent Operator of the Joint Scheme for Rodent Control.

Salvage.

The total amount of waste paper collected during the year again showed an increase over the previous year, amounting to 47 Tons, 1 cwt. 3 qrs. 26 lbs. and realising £238.18.10d.

The cost of collection, sorting and baling amounted to £436.4.6d. showing a deficit of £97.5.8d.

During 1950, the price obtainable for waste paper fell to its lowest, but at the end of the year, prices were beginning to rise, and it appeared that the decision to continue collecting salvage had been a wise one and the scheme would show a profit instead of a loss in 1951.

Rodent Control.

The first full year of the operation of the Joint Pest Control Scheme with the Hitchin and Welwyn Rural District Councils showed that useful work was carried out and in Royston the Rodent Operator's work covered the following:-

Hours worked:-

Sewers, 22hrs. Refuse tips etc. 97½.
Private dwellings 143 hrs. Business premises 38½ hrs.

The number of rats and mice picked up following treatments were, Rats, 463. Mice, 23.

It was not possible to carry out Block Inspections, as is desirable, due to the one operator being fully engaged on treatment work.

The scheme has worked smoothly, and I would like to record my appreciation of the work of the Senior Sanitary Inspector of the Hitchin Rural District Council, who has been in control of the scheme and acted as co-ordinating officer.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The details below show the number of inspections made during the year.

Defects under the Housing Acts	42.
" " " Public Health Acts	149.
" " " Factory Acts	20.
Prevention of Infectious Diseases	6.
Milk & Dairies Order	8.
Food Shops & Stores	48.
Bakehouse Inspections	4.
Prevention of Nuisances	92.
House Drainage	51.
Supervision of Refuse Collection & Disposal	41.
Supervision of Salvage	52.
Rats & Mice Destruction	24.
Caravans & Moveable Dwellings	12.
Miscellaneous Inspections	97.

Details resulting from the above inspections are as follows:

Houses in Clearance Areas to be demolished	6.
Statutory Notices served	2.
Informal Notices served	45.
Notices complied with	47.
House roofs renewed or repaired	29.
House windows repaired	10.
House chimneys repaired	12.
House floors renewed or repaired	32.
House ceilings " " "	37.
House walls (external) repaired or plastered	14.

House eaves gutters renewed or repaired	28.
Internal wall plaster repaired	21.
House drains relaid or repaired	12.
New drains laid	32 yds.
Gullies fixed	6.
Intercepting traps fixed	1.
New sinks fixed	12.
Sinks renewed or repaired	2.
Sink waste pipes renewed or repaired	21.
W.C. roofs repaired	10.
W.C. pans renewed or repaired	6.
W.C. cisterns renewed or repaired	52.
New baths fixed	4.
Inspection chambers built	3.
Inspection chambers repaired	2.
New vent shafts fixed	1.
New F. A. I. fixed	1.
Water service pipes repaired	14.
Dampness remedied	21.
Yards paved or repaired	4.
Cooking ranges renewed or repaired	18.
Hot water systems renewed or repaired	4.
Staircases repaired	4.
Blocked drains cleared & cleansed	35.
Accumulations of rubbish removed	12.
Houses disinfected	6.
Bakehouse floors cleansed	2.
Bakehouse walls cleansed	2.
Bakehouse ceilings repaired & cleansed	1.
Dairies cleansed & limewashed	2.
Sanitary conveniences at factories repaired	2.
" " " " cleansed	2.

New Streets & Buildings.

Total number of plans approved	52.
Plans approved for new houses	7.
" " " other buildings	42.
" " " Change of User	1.
" " " conversion or adaptation	2.
New Houses completed:-	
By Local Authority under Housing Acts	25.
By Private Enterprise	8.
Conversions & adaptations - Family units	2.
Other buildings completed	43.
Drains laid to above	1042 yds.
Gullies laid to above	68.
Connections to sewer	18.
Vent shafts fixed	36.

Inspection Chambers built	80.
Water closets fixed	57.
Septic Tank Installations	1.
Intercepting Traps fixed	14.
Baths fixed	42.
Lavatory basins fixed	46.
Sinks fixed	44.
Dustbins provided	38.
Urinals provided	1.

SECTION D.

Housing

The Post War Housing programme was continued during the year and 25 permanent brick houses on the Orchard Road and Ermine Close Sites were completed. 13 of these were of three bedroom type, 8 were one bedroomed flats and 4 two bedroom type.

Eight new dwellings were erected by private enterprise. All these were of three bedroom types.

Conversions and adaptations of existing buildings by private enterprise provided two family units.

At the end of the year the Housing List stood at a figure of 128 for List "A" applicants, and although in all 109 houses were built and occupied up to the end of 1950, the solution of the housing problem does not appear to be in sight.

The Council hold four premises under requisition and these provide 8 family units of accommodation.

Ex P.O.W.Camp, Therfield Heath.

The huts at this site continued to give anxiety during the year, due to their increasing dilapidation and the extreme difficulty in keeping them as weatherproof as possible.

A commencement was made near the end of the year in the demolition of these huts and one tenant was re-housed and the hut demolished. It was anticipated that this re-housing and subsequent demolition would be accelerated in the year 1951.

Clearance Areas.

6 houses in Clearance Areas still remain to be demolished. One of these is still occupied. Every effort is being made to complete the demolitions and negotiations with the owners of the premises are in progress.

Informal action has been taken where essential repairs were necessary to render houses fit and satisfactory results have been obtained without resource to formal action.

Control of Civil Building.

The Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor has continued to act as the officer responsible for the issue of Building Licences on behalf of the Minister of Works under Defence Regulation 56A.

During 1950, 4 licences to erect new dwelling houses were issued.

Eight houses under licence were completed and occupied during the year.

One building was adapted to provide 2 units of family accommodation.

18 licences were issued for essential works and repairs to properties of a total estimated cost of £4,148.

Of these licences 11 were in respect of dwelling houses and 7 in respect of other buildings.

The works licensed included the provision of additional bedroom, provision of bathroom, erection of boundary wall, erection of garages and the repair and renewal of roofs, eaves gutters and downpipes, drains, external walls, internal wall plaster, ceilings, chimney stacks, floors, cooking and heating apparatus, water closets, sinks, baths and lavatory basins, the repair and painting of external wood and ironwork, internal redecorations and other essential works to bring the property up to a reasonable standard of repair.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Milk.

There are three milk producers in the district, one of whom is licensed by the County Council for the production of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

There are also 2 retail purveyors of milk in the district.

Periodic inspections of farms and dairies were made during the year.

One retail purveyor put in hand necessary works to make his premises suitable for the installation of a pasteurising plant and to comply with the Milk (Special Designation)(Pasteurised & Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Meat.

No slaughtering of animals is carried on in the district.

Meat in butchers shops and fish in fishmongers have been inspected and the following certified as unfit for human consumption.

Beef. (Home killed)	18½ lbs.
Beef. (Imported)	12½ lbs.
Mutton. (Imported)	3 carcases(170 lbs)
Beasts Liver.(Home killed)	16 lbs.

The causes of condemnation were Bone Taint, Bruising, and Inflamation, Emaciated and Dropsical Condition and Decomposition.

Other Foods.

Meat and other food shops were visited and the following were found to be unfit for human consumption on examination and were destroyed.

Figs.	70 lbs.
Tea	½ lb.
Bacon	1½ lbs.
Cheese	3 lbs.12 oz.
Eggs (Danish)	30.
Ham (Imported)	19 lbs. 9 oz.
Spaghetti.	34 lbs.

Tinned and Packetted Food.

Corned Beef. (6 lb. tins)	7.
do do (14 lb. tins)	16.
Meat & Gravy	7.
Luncheon Meat	2.
Mincemeat	1.
Salmon	1.
Brisling	1.
Crawfish	1.
Evaporated Milk	2.
Condensed Milk	17.
Beans	1.
Peas	10.
Plums	20.
Jam	8.
Grapefruit Juice	1.
Canned Apple	1.
Peaches	1.
Marmalade	9.
Soups	8.
Mustard	1.
Tomatoes	2.
Sandwich Spread	1.
Ketchup	1.
Spaghetti	1.

Food & Drugs Act 1938.

Byelaws with respect to the Handling, Wrapping and Delivery of Food and the Sale of Food in the Open Air were made by the Council and confirmed by the Minister of Food in October.

These byelaws are designed to secure the observance of sanitary and cleanly conditions and practices in connection with the handling, wrapping and delivery of food, and to augment the Ministry's publicity campaign, a talk was given to the local branch of the Chamber of Commerce.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks.

No intimation of any occurrence of food poisoning was received during the year.

Green Plunge Swimming Pool.

Samples of water were taken from the above and analysis showed the pool to be suitable for bathing purposes.

Factories Act, 1937.

The following table gives the information required by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in accordance with Form 572.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (Including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector)

Premises	Number of			
	No. in Register	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted
I. Factories in which Secs. 1, 2, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	9	5	2	-
II. Factories not included in (1) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authority.	21	12	-	-
III. Other premises in which Sec. 7 is enforced by Local Authority. (excl. outworkers).	1	3	-	-
Total	31	20	2	-

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects found.				
	Found.	Remedied	To. H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	No. of prosecutions.
Want of cleanliness	3	3	-	-	-
Overcrowding	Nil	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temp.	Nil	-	-	-	-
Inadequate vent.	Nil	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	Nil	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient	Nil	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	4	4	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act	Nil	-	-	-	-
Total	7	7	-	-	-

SECTION F.

Prevalence of, and control over, infectious and other diseases.

Total notifications of infectious diseases within the district (after correction) were:

Measles	2.
Erysipelas	1.

By reason of its geographical isolation, Royston appears to have sharp outbreaks of Measles and Whooping Cough in its child population at relatively infrequent intervals, and 1950 was an interval year.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Deaths During the Year

Age Periods	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 5	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-

Deaths allocated by Registrar General after final transfer } 1.

Notified respiratory cases show a reduction from 5 in 1949 to 2.

The total of finally allocated deaths (1) is the same as for 1949.

VICTOR R. WALKER.

District Medical Officer of Health.